

Message Study Guide

(Scriptures & quotes from this week's message are available on thorncreek.church/live)

Warming up

1. How would you define commitment?

Digging Deeper & Application

Take your time reading the scripture given. If possible look up the verses in different versions and pause at each verse and discuss it.

2. Where's the longest place, relationship, job, that you have ever stayed at? Why or why not?
3. Please read, Acts 2:42-47. What does this passage say about commitment?

- a. Would the results have been the same without that commitment?

4. Our world today is less committal than ever. Talk about these philosophies and share whether or not you agree with them.

I'd rather hang out and leave on my terms.

I don't want responsibility.

I want to keep my options open.

The grass is greener on the other side.

- a. How has this philosophy impacted relationships, dating, marriage, etc?
- b. How has this philosophy impacted church attendance, volunteering in a church, giving, etc.?
- c. Compare with the Barna Study that says, each year, 1 out of 7 adults change their church membership. Another 1 out of 6 regularly attends a handful of churches on a rotating basis rather than sticking with the same church week after week.

5. What do these studies say about marriage and faith?
 - a. The University of Virginia's Brad Wilcox found that regular church attendance cuts the likelihood of divorce by 30 percent to 35 percent. Wilcox's work is supported by another study by Annette Mahoney of Bowling Green State University, which independently came to a similar conclusion.

 - b. A 1998 survey by the Georgia Family Council found that among couples who prayed together weekly, only 7 percent had seriously considered divorce, compared to 65 percent of those who never prayed together.

6. What do you think about Rick Warren's quote? "The difference between being a church attender and a church member is commitment. Attenders are spectators from the sidelines; members get involved in the ministry. Attenders are consumers; members are contributors. Attenders want the benefits of a church without sharing the responsibility. They are like couples that want to live together without committing to marriage."

7. Rick Warren talked about Six Concentric Circles of Commitment in the local Church. Which circle are you in?

8. Share your thoughts about this final quote:
"Prevailing churches are full of people who aren't afraid to commit. They don't sidestep responsibility. They aren't mysteriously absent. They don't hide behind a busy calendar. They are committed to the cause of His church."

Application

Did you write someone's name down on PRAY? (If not, pick someone now that you will pray for)

- **Pray for them every day, between now and Christmas Day.**
- **Commit to inviting them to church sometime between now and Christmas Eve services.**

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